

Austin Water Center for Environmental Research



Austin Water – The University of Texas – Texas A&M University
A Partnership for Urban Ecology and Sustainability: Community, Education, Research
located at the Hornsby Bend Biosolids Management Plant
2210 South FM 973, Austin, Texas 78725
Website: www.austintexas.gov/cer and Facebook pages for CER and Hornsby Bend



2014 CER Lunchtime Lectures

Dr. Kevin M. Anderson

Nature and the American Mind

New for 2014 – 3 times a month from NOON to 1pm

Waller Center
625 East 10th Street

Dougherty Arts Center
1110 Barton Springs Road

City Hall
Boards and Commissions Room

Free and Open to the Public – bring a lunch and learn

2014 is the eleventh year of CER Lunchtime Lectures, and this year's lectures will focus on our myths of American Nature. Myths are foundational narratives used by humans to make sense of the world. We all know the traditional narrative of American Nature – that there once was wilderness in America, discovered and destroyed by European settlers, or, perhaps, not all destroyed, as we preserved bits and pieces of untouched Nature in “wilderness areas” and “parks”. Meanwhile, we try to conserve the rest of Nature outside of the boundaries of preservation, but conservationists divided between “sportsmen” who kill and eat nature and “nature-watchers” who look and take pictures of nature. Looming over all is the shadow of the City, that sprawl of urbanism destroying American Nature. This caricature of a complicated story leaves out ecology, environmentalism, sustainability, agriculture, and more.

In 1967, the historian Roderick Nash published a foundational book about the idea of wilderness entitled *Wilderness and the American Mind*. I have shamelessly modified his title for my broader effort to explore the many aspects of **Nature and the American Mind**, this complex story that threads through our history and shapes beliefs, policies, science, and management practices today. I will begin the year by exploring four main **Myths of American Nature** – wilderness, pastoral, urban, and the newly emerging narrative of resilient nature. Through the summer, I will look at **Science and American Nature** – the development of natural history, biology, ecology, and environmental science was shaped by the myths of American Nature. Then I will finish the year by examining how myths and science influence the **Management of American Nature** from the early battle between preservationists and conservationists to the relationship between farming and nature to urban planning and design meant to sustain American cities through using nature.

So join me in 2014 as I explore **Nature and the American Mind!**

Dr. Kevin M. Anderson is a geographer and philosopher who is the coordinator of the Austin Water Center for Environmental Research. He has studied at Allegheny College in Pennsylvania [BA], Durham University, England, Ohio University [MA] where he taught philosophy and symbolic logic for several years. He received his Ph.D. in Geography from the University of Texas at Austin with a dissertation entitled: *Marginal Nature: Urban Wastelands and the Geography of Nature*. His research interests include soil ecology and sustainable agriculture, urban ecology and sustainability, riparian ecology, environmental history, philosophy, and literature. He is a co-founder of the Texas Riparian Association and Research Fellow with the University of Texas - Texas Natural Science Center.

[Email: Kevin.Anderson@austintexas.gov]

Myths of American Nature – January to April

January 7 at Waller Center –Wilderness: The Myth of Pristine Nature

January 8 at Dougherty Arts Center – Wilderness: The Myth of Pristine Nature

January 14 at City Hall - Wilderness: The Myth of Pristine Nature

February 11 at Waller Center –Pastoral Nature: the Agrarian Myth of the Yeoman Farmer

February 12 at Dougherty Arts Center – Pastoral Nature: the Agrarian Myth of the Yeoman Farmer

February 19 at City Hall – Pastoral Nature: the Agrarian Myth of the Yeoman Farmer

March 19 at City Hall – Urban Nature: The American City and Degraded Nature

March 25 at Waller Center – Urban Nature: The American City and Degraded Nature

March 26 at Dougherty Arts Center – Urban Nature: The American City and Degraded Nature

April 8 at Waller Center –Resilient Nature: Wasteland and the New Ecology

April 9 at Dougherty Arts Center – Resilient Nature: Wasteland and the New Ecology

April 16 at City Hall – Resilient Nature: Wasteland and the New Ecology

Science and American Nature – May to August

May 13 at Waller Center – American Natural History and the Theory of Degenerate Nature

May 14 at Dougherty Arts Center – American Natural History and the Theory of Degenerate Nature

May 21 at City Hall - American Natural History and the Theory of Degenerate Nature

June 10 at Waller Center – Biology, Ecological Change, and Native Species

June 11 at Dougherty Arts Center – Biology, Ecological Change, and Native Species

June 18 at City Hall - Biology, Ecological Change, and Native Species

July 8 at Waller Center – Ecology, Ecosystem Services, and the Balance of Nature

July 9 at Dougherty Arts Center – Ecology, Ecosystem Services, and the Balance of Nature

July 16 at City Hall - Ecology, Ecosystem Services, and the Balance of Nature

August 6 at City Hall - Environmental Science, Sustainability, and Human Nature

August 12 at Waller Center – Environmental Science, Sustainability, and Human Nature

August 13 at Dougherty Arts Center – Environmental Science, Sustainability, and Human Nature

Management of American Nature – September to December

September 9 at Waller Center – Saving American Nature: Conservation vs. Preservation

September 10 at Dougherty Arts Center – Saving American Nature: Conservation vs. Preservation

September 17 at City Hall - Saving American Nature: Conservation vs. Preservation

October 7 at Waller Center – Farming with Nature: the Unsettling of America

October 8 at Dougherty Arts Center – Farming with Nature: the Unsettling of America

October 15 at City Hall - Farming with Nature: the Unsettling of America

November 12 at Dougherty Arts Center – Design with Nature: Ecological Cities and the Myth of Sustainability

November 13 at Waller Center – Design with Nature: Ecological Cities and the Myth of Sustainability

November 19 at City Hall – Design with Nature: Ecological Cities and the Myth of Sustainability

December 9 at Waller Center – The End of Nature: Prospective Ecology and the American Mind

December 10 at Dougherty Arts Center – The End of Nature: Prospective Ecology and the American Mind

December 17 at City Hall - The End of Nature: Prospective Ecology and the American Mind